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Editors: W. Emmett Small, Helen Todd

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"THE WAY OF HEAVEN"

G. DE PURUCKER

I was asked once why it was that in all the ancient scriptures, so far as we know them, with a few exceptions all spiritual teaching was given in the vernacular of the battlefield. The Bhagavad-Gîtâ, for instance, tells of the battle between the opposing armies of the Kurus and the Pândavas; in the Scandinavian mythology, for instance, there is the constant battling between the gods and the heroes; in the Greek mythology likewise there is constant battling. The Egyptian, the Persian, the Babylonian mythologies, all are alike in this respect.

No question is more easily answered: To little children you give story-books; to boys you give story-books of a somewhat different kind; to unevolved men who cannot understand the meaning of peace and quiet and the enormous strength that lies in these, you talk of battle, and of fighting, because in battle and in fighting there is always a victor and a vanquished; and you tell them: "Be you the victor." That is all there is to it. It is common language, common phraseology.

A great many of the sacred scriptures were written for warlike, battling peoples. The ancient Germanic tribes, including the Scandinavians, and the people of the time of the Homeric poems, and similarly the various other nations in different parts of the world whose literatures contain epic poems, as is also the case with the *Gîtâ*, which is one episode in one of the greatest of the epic poems—all were battling, warlike, and fighting peoples, and their epic literatures took the form that they possess because they were written for battling peoples. Secrets of mystic truths were written in the epic vein in order to meet the mental characteristics of those various ages.

But behind all this, behind the necessity of teaching hard-fisted and hard-headed warriors some of the beautiful lessons of truth and of compassion, there were the esoteric schools, which taught truth, which taught compassion, much as great Lao-Tse of China taught: to wit, that the way of *Tao*—often translated *Heaven*—is not to strive. Half-understanding Occidental scholars, studying these Oriental scriptures, make fun of the idea that the way to succeed is by not *striving* to succeed; that the way to progress rapidly is by hastening more with mind and heart, but without the idea of speedy accomplishment; that the way to health is in the attainment of harmony rather than in the mere practice of formal rules.

But Lao-Tse was right. Quiet are the places where

growth takes place. Still are the chambers where light enters the heart. Nature's most majestic processes are silent, peaceful, quiet. The rattling drum and the blaring brass-band may stand as ideals for the little boy, but for the Sage—no! All growth is quiet, takes place without striving, in the silence. Battle, strife, activity, hustle, bustle—all these things are signs of human imperfections, and of a lack of knowledge of the Wisdom of the Heart-Doctrine. It is indeed the way of Heaven not to strive.

—From an Informal Talk at Point Loma

LIVE IN THE ETERNAL

W. E. WILKS

This article was first published in *The Theosophist*, September 1967, and again in *The Canadian Theosophist*, Nov-Dec. 1977, where it was introduced with the following editorial note: "The name of Dr. W. E. Wilks (1885-1969) needs no introduction to older readers of this magazine. He was most active in the affairs of the Orpheus Lodge and of The Theosophical Society in Canada. Of his many fine qualities, that of being foremost among those who 'stand up and be counted' when serious questions are asked stays clearly in our memories." Eps.

In rule 4 in *Light on the Path*, the disciple is directed to "Seek in the heart the source of evil and expunge it." This evil is self-love, egoism. Later it is called "the Giant Weed."

"It lives fruitfully in the heart of the devoted disciple as well as in the heart of the man of desire.

MEDITATIONS—8

You look and wait for some great and astounding occurrence to show you that you are going to be permitted to enter behind the veil, that you are to be 'initiated'. It will never come. He only who studies all things and learns from them, as he finds them, will be permitted to enter, and for him there are no flashings of lightnings or rolling thunder. It comes as softly and imperceptibly as is the opening of a flower. Live well your life, strive to realize the meaning of every event. Strive to find the Ever Living and wait for more Light.

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

Only the strong can kill it out. . . . He who will enter upon the path of power must tear this thing out of his heart. And then the heart will bleed and the whole life of the man seem to be utterly dissolved. This ordeal must be endured."

And then the direction how this may be done:

"Live neither in the present nor the future, but in the Eternal. This giant weed cannot flower there; this blot upon existence is wiped out by the very atmosphere of eternal thought."

And then he is directed to "Kill out all sense of separateness" and to "Kill out the hunger for growth." To this is later added:

"Grow as the flower grows unconsciously, but eagerly anxious to open its soul to the air. So must you press forward to open your Soul to the Eternal. But it must be the Eternal which draws forth your strength and beauty, not desire of growth."

These are directions for disciples and we are but students of Theosophy who are seeking to know how to live wisely, fruitfully; seeking the "Good Life". It is most probable that by seeking to understand, in part at least, the directions given to disciples we may discover the wise directions for our energies and our efforts. One can see that to attempt to grow by willed effort is to try to raise oneself by the use of personal energies which can lead only to growth of personal stature. It will cause the growth of pride and self-respect, and the desire to stand high in the eyes of our peers; to live respected and die honored.

These forms of self-love which have produced beautiful and even self-sacrificing actions, have brought us to where we are at the "turning point" where we hope we are—mature, civilized individuals. Pride and even self-respect, are now the most subtle, deep-seated and difficult forms of egoism which are the obstacles we as disciples must eventually overcome. This is the reason why it must be the yearning for the Eternal and not the desire for growth which must draw us onward. So the part of wisdom for us must be to try to stop feeding and swelling our egoism (something many of us do) and to try to live in the Eternal, which brings us to the core of our inquiry—"How live in the Eternal?"

To us the Eternal means timelessness, changelessness, imperishableness and infinity. Herein is no positive quality which the mind can grasp or which we can even imagine ourselves living in.

What are our impersonal values? They are all those selfless qualities such as Truth, Justice, Compassion, which we desire for all mankind, for all time and also for ourselves. *We have to find some stepping stones to the Eternal*, some qualities which partake of the Eternal. These are to be found in our spiritual values which being impersonal, yet can be grasped and lived, at least

in imagination. In *The Voice of the Silence* we read:

"To live and reap experience, the mind needs breadth and depth and points to draw it towards the Diamond Soul. Seek not those points in *Mâyâ's* realm; but soar beyond illusions, search the eternal and the changeless Sat, mistrusting fancy's false suggestions. . . . Shun ignorance, and likewise shun illusion. Avert thy face from world deceptions; mistrust thy senses, they are false. But within thy body—the shrine of thy sensations—seek in the Impersonal for the 'Eternal Man'."

Here, living in the body, we can seek in the impersonal for the Eternal Man.

Almost every chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* describes one of these impersonal values, one rung of the ladder which leads to the Eternal.

The part of wisdom for the student will be to discover which amongst all the impersonal spiritual values, is above all his—that value into which at the end of his life he will be glad to know that he has put all the free energy he could muster to become an embodiment of it. To decide finally which is his value may take months, or years, but it will be time well spent. At first he may choose some high and fine thing which does not really draw out his admiration, and desire to become it, but eventually he will single out that value or values for which he would be willing to die—if he had the power. This value is his special link with the Eternal. It is that aspect of the infinite Eternal which means most to him and in which he proposes to live to the best of his ability. For here he steps outside the bonds of his Self-love and grows by opening his Soul to the Eternal, to awaken impersonal qualities asleep within him.

To try to hold a value in mind all the time is to attempt the impossible, which leads only to discouragement or self-deception. The scientific way, we are told, is to mark off a time, small or large, during which we hold ourselves responsible for living this value. In time its influence will spread as a background over much of the day.

All spiritual values are aspects of Selflessness. The attempt to live "to give without asking" seems far afield from Self-mastery but both require bringing the forces of the personality under the control of the Intelligence for the benefit of humanity.

In this way, discovering our value and pledging and committing ourselves to it, come what may, we start to build in ourselves a fixed center. No longer shall we vacillate and be enthused today and change to another aim in six months, or six years, or six lives, time; we have a star however far and distant, yet our fixed star, and this fixed center in ourselves is the start of what shall some day become an Occultist. We are striving—wherever we are in the scale of being—to live for and in what to us is "the Eternal that draws forth your strength and beauty."

A WORD ABOUT SPINOZA AND THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

Jan Venema was active until a few hours before his peaceful death on June 26, 1977. The following are selected notes from one of his last talks given that year to members of the School for the Study and Promulgation of the Esoteric Philosophy, at The Hague, The Netherlands.—Eds.

As we always refer to the convictions which great thinkers and philosophers in history have reached, showing that the essential theosophical teachings can be found everywhere if one can separate the details from the 'heart of things' and can interpret mystical phrases, our thoughts this year naturally turned to Spinoza. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 628-29 and *The Esoteric Tradition*, I, 150). For the name and work of this Dutch philosopher (1632-77) had circulated all over the country during the commemoration of his life and work (1977). He was born at Amsterdam and his parents came to Holland from Portugal to escape the Inquisition, and he lived thereafter at The Hague. We visited his house at Pavilioensgracht; and this February the story of his life has been commemorated in newspaper editorials and in lectures, as well as television broadcasts.

Thinking of all this we were once more convinced that it is essential to point to what may be called fundamentals and principles. Spinoza's universal ideas and critical mind, as one writer said, had and still has a great influence on truth-seeking people. How inspiring it is that in those times of dogma and churchianity Spinoza rejected the idea of a creation of the world according to the limited theological conception of his day, and conceived the world as an all-embracing unity! As a writer in one of our Netherlands papers said, he saw no opposition between spirit and matter, being two aspects of one reality embracing all Being, called *Substance* by him. There is a remarkable connection between modern scientific convictions and those of Spinoza in this respect. Students of genuine Theosophy, divine Wisdom, will understand what Spinoza meant when he stated that the human mind ('*ratio*') can to a certain degree fathom Reality, and his principal work, the *Ethics*, will teach us many identifiable things about 'God', the law of cause and effect, the power of reason, and the coherence of the universe around us. We are impressed by his words that a human being *needs* his fellowmen and that the State has to look after the spiritual freedom of its subjects. Indeed, this modest and soberly-living man, who supported himself at the time by grinding and polishing lenses, promulgated moral teachings which have enduring validity. We know that many thinkers in the world have been inspired by his view of the universe and by his optimistic ideas of life.

It is notable in this respect to realize that the great philosophers, the enlightened souls in human history, always laid the outcome of their investigations before their fellowmen, but did not in any way 'incarcerate' them in sectarian form. They indeed were deeply con-

vinced of the fact—the old maxim dating from the ancient Mysteries—"everything in real spiritual evolution and penetration into the 'heart of the universe' depends on yourself." The echo of this we still hear in Dutch Masonry. How many difficulties might have been avoided if this had been understood by the various organizations which are the necessary instruments for disseminating spiritual ideas and ideals, but the leaders of which failed sufficiently to realize that a *cosmic* philosophy of life must rouse the *individual* and hence must be studied in small groups of serious thinkers. The future of the world will probably show this more and more, for it is based on the working methods of the Mystery-Schools. Behind those methods and inspiring them was that 'law of laws'—love and compassion for all that lives, which is the pathway to the Hierarchies of Light.

THEOSOPHICAL DOCTRINES AND LIFE STYLE

WILLIAM R. LAUDAHN

Described as the "most illuminating teaching in the world," is *The Secret Doctrine's* "fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Oversoul." First, we realize that such a grand vision does not ordinarily occur to the man in the street. Something special is required. Secondly, we here catch a glimpse of the inner meaning of Brotherhood and a spiritually exact idea of who we are. But, let us reduce this cosmic scheme to the personal level.

No Einstein is needed to point out that relativity prevails everywhere. Our small, struggling existence is as meaningful as the Great Life, for what would the One be without the Other? The teaching is that Man is a tiny replica of the great Cosmos. The success or failure of a single lifetime is only *apparently* gobbled up by the Cosmic Shredder, but the aroma, if not the memory, lingers on. Perhaps 'image' is the better word.

It has been said that if each person tidied up his own back yard, the whole world would be (relatively) spotless. So, in that spirit, to enhance our image is a duty; and duty, without attachment, is a theosophical imperative, as the Gîtâ makes abundantly clear. Theosophy is a knowledge; and we must, at the very least, know our correct duty and destination relative to the time, place and persons involved.

Early Christianity, influenced by those who know, the Gnostics—Theosophists of that time—insisted that the physical body is the Temple of the Inner God, and therefore it should be well taken care of healthwise, etc., not needlessly risked. Nietzsche, though, advised the "dangerous life" for the "Superman." Now, are his terms to be taken strictly on the material level? No, for in the Wisdom Teachings, spiritual meanings are to be sought in all actual or alleged events.

The late Prime Minister Nehru of India is reported to have criticized Theosophists for holding to security

and, in effect, being "lovers, not fighters." Very well, common sense tells us that dashing out in reckless abandon (even in the guise of a "good time") hardly equates with guarding the divine life in our hands. Besides, nowadays, the real fight is on the psychological plane. Many are the mystics telling of the pitfalls on the Path. And any sincere Theosophist will affirm that his theosophical life and study is not without emotional risk. It goes against the grain of the common worldly ways. Many of us can relate poignant tales involving misunderstandings—sometimes violent—on the part of family or friends. During the Battle of Britain, Churchill promised, as the price of victory, "blood, sweat and tears." The same goes, on a higher level, for the spiritual aspirant. "As below," says the Master, "so above." It's fight, fight, fight (spiritually) all the way. But we know, from the market place, that nothing cheap is worthwhile.

Our first step on this (or any) Path is important and may well color the cause-effect vibrations (Karma) of a distant future. It has been pointed out that a Theosophist should know pretty much what his first or next move will be and guided, hopefully, by wisdom, for does not our doctrine imply this in its very name, The Divine Wisdom?

Among other things, wisdom would make changes with an eye to improvement in our share of The One Life, without being swept up in the glamour of "change for the sake of change." That is the work of the Buddhist discriminative faculty, part of our Higher Self aspect of the One Life. The word 'discrimination' is now, after the turmoil of the 60's, reasonably considered to be wrong when applied to our physical differences: Whites versus Blacks, and so forth. But a fine sense of discrimination is required in many other areas. Certainly, we must be disciplined enough to choose the superior as against the inferior. for in real life our decision matters and may cast a long shadow. This is simple consideration for ourselves and others; it is the very makings of Karma, especially the "good" kind. In our zeal to present our theosophical viewpoint it goes without saying that we should use the higher discrimination. Krishna said that "All ways lead to Me." If one approach is not workable, seek a better. As the question goes, "why not the best?"

From mathematics we learn that a line is composed of points, many of them. In *The Secret Doctrine* we see that the first manifestation is a point. Of these, the transforming agent (or laya center) is a dynamic, radical force. During the recent superficial sweep of "New Left" politics some people spoke up for what they called the "Radical Center." Though this term is no longer current, it implies great flexibility and innovation in the Vital Middle, as opposed to a mediocre moderation. It would be a valuable concept, not only in politics but in theosophical life. If the Radical Center seems much like the Buddha's well known Middle Way, so be it. But often repeated terms can lose their meaning. The Radical-Center-In-Living concept (theosophical to the core) implies movement, dialectics.

Such is the very essence of what G. de Purucker called The Circulation of the Cosmos. In harmony with this we are to be distinctive but not isolated. Theosophists draw on inner resources when surrounded by "soul-less beings." It remains for higher humanity—possessors of Manas—to see and do occultly. The others? We can forgive them for acting without knowing.

Our individual duty is to attune ourselves to the right ray from the Great Point, the Radical Center, realizing all the while that the outer extremes of today might well become moderation itself tomorrow. All beings and events are necessary to the Divine Economy. But we, armed with our Doctrine—named the "only true one" by the Mahâ-Chohan—can, and indeed must, break away from the thundering herd and follow the Theosophical life-style.

AND WE QUOTE . . .

Life the Principal Guru

There is a great need for the birth of moral values in daily life. This applies to the whole world. But for us in the Theosophical Movement life itself is the most important guru that any of us can have. There may be those in the background of our lives to whom we look with reverence and respect, but if we would look to life itself, which is moving, surging and flowing within and without us all the time, we would find life the best teacher of all, and if we are involved in life we are involved also in the action that flows inevitably from it. . . .

A great milestone has passed as we speed on into the second century, and so it is now the future that must concern us. In the new countries of the world and in this country, India, changes are taking place rapidly too, but we have to consider what our real work as the Society should be. We are here, if I understand rightly, from our early beginnings *to work*. We are not here just to sit and listen, and yet because of India's long traditions, it is natural for many to seek the right guru and sit at his feet. This is a very different approach from the one which is inherent in the theosophical way of life. I suggest to you that we should sit at the feet of life and make of life the principal guru to whom we pay attention. Many Hindus have studied the *Gîtâ* and *Upanishads* but have not looked profoundly into what Theosophy really is. In western countries too, many of our members are deeply immersed in the Christian tradition and try to fit the wider ideas of Theosophy into their own pattern, rather than to move out from the background of their own religion into the vastly wider field which is embraced by Theosophy. What is the purpose of the Society if not to try and spread as far as we can in every direction the ideas of wisdom and love to which we are dedicated?

—JOHN B. S. COATS, The President's Closing Address
at the 101st International Convention,
Adyar, Dec. 31, 1976

Reincarnation

A.T. Can a Christian, in good faith, accept the concept of reincarnation and still remain a Christian?

MACGREGOR. I am quite sure that this is so. The only question is whether it really is the sort of doctrine that can be regarded as optional, as a possible interpretation, or whether it may be more than that—something that the Church has really lost and should recover. The issue then is whether it is something that really belongs to what might be called the plenitude of the Christian faith, which for various historical reasons has been overhadowed and pushed aside, which it would be helpful to have reconstituted.

—Interview with Geddes MacGregor,
author of *Reincarnation in Christianity*,
(*The American Theosophist*, August 1978)

Light

Almost without exception in the cosmogonic mythoi or statements about the beginnings of creation of the universe, ancient spiritual traditions show its first manifestation as some sort of *light*. Some of these speak of the purposive *action* generated in the “mind” of the creator forces, which instantly produces that light. Others assert that it is at this initial point of cosmic birth when what we call time and space first appear. What Young [author of *The Reflexive Universe: Evolution of Consciousness*] has done is to offer a stunning convergence of the data of science with the traditional knowledge regarding the origins of our physical universe and the process of evolution or emanation of consciousness in and through “matter.” In fact, he makes us aware that, for all we know, in some real sense the whole material universe from its galactic and supergalactic magnitudes down to its intra-atomic underpinnings may be nothing but a marvelously and infinitely differentiated structure of *light*, the primal undifferentiated source of it all.

—BLAIR A. MOFFETT in *Sunrise*, June-July 1978

The Unheralded

The public image of the Theosophical community at Point Loma was made up largely by the biographies of its two acknowledged Leaders, in big headlines; but in the detailed text under the headlines, the record is also made up of the unheralded biographies of a unique group of self-effacing, aspiring, dedicated men and women who gave themselves—and in some cases their fortunes too—to the furtherance of an idealistic, very serious, and in large measure successful effort to create what one of the Theosophical Masters who inspired the founding of the Theosophical Society in New York in 1875 declared was their main purpose: “The *Chiefs* want a ‘Brotherhood of Humanity’, a real Universal Fraternity started; an institution which will make itself known throughout the world, and arrest the attention of the highest minds.” (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 24).

—IVERSON L. HARRIS in Preface to
California Utopia, Point Loma: 1897-1942,
by Emmett A. Greenwalt

ISLAMIC POET AND SAGE

The West knows little of Islam and Islamic culture, and save for what is said by H.P.B. about the Sufis, there is not a great deal concerning Muslim culture and philosophy in Theosophical literature. It becomes of special interest, therefore, to learn from a New American Library paperback, *Science and Civilization in Islam*, that Omar Khayyam (1044-1125) wrote not only great poetry but was esteemed during his lifetime as both a mathematician and a philosopher. The author of this useful work, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, a professor at Teheran University, remarks: “That he [Omar] should be regarded in the Western world, on the strength of his famous quatrains, as a skeptical hedonist is itself a sign of the profound lack of understanding between the two worlds; for he was in reality a sage and a gnostic of high standing.” Mr. Nasr quotes from a metaphysical text by Khayyam, in which he speaks of various seekers for truth.

Summarizing a portion of this text by a writer known to us only as a poet, this modern Muslim says:

“Khayyam mentions, finally, the Sufis, or gnostics, the group to which he himself belonged. It may seem surprising that a man so well versed in the arts and sciences of his day should consider the ‘way of purification’ of the Sufis as the best way of acquiring knowledge. His language in this regard, however, is not merely theoretical, it is almost operational: one cleanses and focuses the instrument of perception, i.e., the soul, so that it may see the realities of the spiritual world. Aristotle himself, the great rationalist, had once said that ‘knowledge is according to the mode of the knower.’ The gnostic, in employing the ‘right’ mode of knowledge ensures that Intellection takes place in him immediately and intuitively. In this regard, Khayyam’s statement becomes clearer when seen in the light of . . . the doctrine of the universal man, who is not only the final goal of the spiritual life, but also the archetype of the universe.

“To the extent that the gnostic is able to purify himself of his individualistic and particular nature, and thus identify himself with the universal man within him, to that same extent does he also gain knowledge of the principles of the cosmos, as well as of the Divine realities.”

These are familiar ideas to the student of Theosophy, showing, once again, the underlying unity of the great religions of the world, in their inner aspect of teaching.

—Reprinted from ‘On the Lookout’ in
Theosophy, January 1978

BOOK REVIEWS

INTUITION AND THE CREATIVE IMAGINATION, *The American Theosophist* special Spring 1978 issue, Wheaton, Illinois.

Perceptions of the meaning of intuition and creativity as expressed in the articles of the spring number (1978) of *The American Theosophist* vary from a "flash of clairvoyance" (*Who's Behind Those Foster Glasses?*) to a "direct knowing" or, as Leonard Bosman in his article called it, "the voice of the Real Self". In *Art and Life* Milenko Mantanovic describes intuition as the capacity to be receptive to the "subtler and deeper impulses running through and between our lives", and creativity the capacity to "express that attunement in form". Creativity in poetry and art is discussed in several short essays, any one of which could be developed to greater depth and philosophical significance. Impressive references to psychologists and their findings are used throughout.

Most of us have at some time been assailed by divergophobia, the fear of being *different*, and so have allowed peer pressure or social ridicule to interfere with an honest investigation of Truth. Great numbers because of this pressure have neglected the development of intuitive faculties which could open vast areas of world thought and evolutionary expansion in science, religion, and philosophy. In her article *Creativity and Divergophobia: A Model of Unlearning*, Marilyn Ferguson shows how independent thinkers — inventors, mathematical geniuses, composers, *et al*—have felt so secure in their inner selves as to have withstood the jeers of skeptics in pursuit of a facet of truth that ultimately carried beneficial rewards for all. The author points out that children are the great losers in the pressure to 'conform' and that even 'gifted' children's potentials for creativity are crushed. (Tests show that 'gifted' children though mostly very satisfying to teach have not generally achieved creativity. W. Q. Judge, who called intuition the "inner monitor," also said that "the intuitions of the little child are stifled until at last they are almost lost. . .".—*Echoes of the Orient*)

In a well enunciated article, Adelaide Gardner promotes the idea that intuitive perception can be a powerful instrument in research into science, economics, medicine, education, and other aspects of social life that would give the world-mind an upward thrust toward beneficial evolution. She speaks of 'temporary explosions' into Reality and suggests practical techniques for the development of the intuitive faculty. The best mind for intuitive research, she believes, is one that has been trained 'to be both honest and impersonal'. The merits of this article are well worth meditating upon.

What about intuition as a 'spark of clairvoyance' and the 'fleeting nature' of it? Is it not rather the restless *manas* that is fleeting and resistant to quiet meditation and therefore experiences only 'flashes' of intuition—

which the Master K. H. (in *The Mahatma Letters*) once called the key to unlocking the occult secrets?—And that once *manas* is quiet and accepts the disciplines required to KNOW, it steadies itself and with poise and true faith turns the key to unlock the mysteries that lead to Self Knowledge? This is an elusive subject that demands much thought to grasp.

—JALIE N. SHORE

Visions of Heaven and Hell, by Richard Cavendish. Harmony Books, New York, 1977, paper \$6.95, cloth \$12.00.

A very fine presentation of Heaven and Hell in Art, ranging from the cultures of the East to the more familiar Christian philosophy of the West. The time period covered includes also the more modern illustrators.

The reproductions in color and black and white are of very high caliber, and a wide-ranging literary grasp of the subject has given the editor a very firm and deeply integrative hold on the whole problem.

While it has always been easier to describe Hell than to imagine Heaven, Mr. Cavendish is aware of the sadistic and masochistic lure of the torments of Hell in art and literature as well as the relation of drugs and insanity to much of the gory details.

This book is not just a plaything of or a picture book for the so-called trip-happy drug and over yoga-ed denizens of our present far-out generation, but a real and needed contribution to serious philosophic research. It is a monument also to the potential artistry of 20th century book craftsmanship.

The chapter divisions are extremely well done and reflect the subtle nuances of this vast and vital subject—Life After Death, Paradise and Heaven, The Perfect Existence, The Underworld, and The Abyss of Hell.

—K. G. HECK

BOOKS RECEIVED

Self-Realization Through Love, Narada Bhakti-Sutra, with text in Sanskrit, Transliteration in Roman, Translation in English and Commentary, by I. K. Taimni, Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, India.

The Ultimate Reality and Realization, Śiva-Sutra, with text in Sanskrit, transliteration in Roman, translation in English and Commentary, by I. K. Taimni, TPH, Adyar, India.

Yoga: The Art of Integration, a Commentary on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, by Rohit Mehta, TPH, Adyar, India.

Astrological Cycles and the Life Crisis Periods, by John Townley, Samuel Weiser, Inc., New York.

Strindberg and Van Gogh, by Karl Jasper, translated by Oskar Grunow and David Woloshin, University of Arizona Press, Tucson, Arizona.

ITEMS of INTEREST

Lectures on Theosophy in Canada

From September 8 to the end of October L. Gordon Plummer of Point Loma Publications, Inc., on invitation of the Theosophical Society in Canada, will be speaking at public meetings and to study groups of members of the T.S. at Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto, and Montreal.

Gifts to Library

Valuable gifts to Point Loma Publications Library continue. Some recent contributions are: 6 volumes of *The Theosophist* and 10 volumes of *The Path* (from the former Neresheimer Library, courtesy of Boris de Zirkoff of Los Angeles); translations of theosophical literature in German and Dutch (the work of Emmi Haerter and Mary Linné of Unterlengenhardt, Germany), which include many chapters of G. de Purucker's *The Esoteric Tradition*, G. Barborka's *Divine Plan*, and some pamphlets of P. A. Malpas; copies of editions of Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*. And from Blanch Leydecker, in the name of the late Joaquin and Astrid Navarro, from their library, one hundred and fifty and more books of standard theosophical works, Greek classics, and volumes of history and philosophy.

To the donors of these valuable gifts most appreciative thanks from the Board of Point Loma Publications and its Librarian.

Anna-Lisa Smit

On July 7 Anna-Lisa Smit entered what Theosophists speak of as the Great Peace. This happened quite suddenly and peacefully when she and her husband Arien Smit, President of the Theosophical Society HPB (in Holland) were on a visit to Mrs. Harry Benjamin in Worthing, England. She died in her sleep. Mrs. Smit had been a member of the Society for 40 years, she and her sister, Mrs. Inge Häthen, having as children attended 'Lotus-Circle' and later the summer school in Visingsö, Sweden. Her mother and sister were also devoted T.S. members. To her husband, sister and family go the understanding sympathy and love of many friends.

Annual Convention in Büdingen

The Theosophische Gesellschaft (Theosophischer Arbeitskreis, Unterlengenhardt) 1978 Convention, to which all interested Theosophists were invited, was held on 17th and 18th June in Büdingen, Germany. The lectures on the first day were "Theosophy in Daily Life" by Frans Fonhof (editor of *Manas*), "Theosophy Can Answer All Your Questions (The Bermuda Triangle and Atlantis)" by Lisette Wölfel; and in the evening, "Faith in Life" by Irmgard Scheithauer (Berlin Lodge of T.S. Adyar). On the following day: "The Secret Opponent" by Friedrich Steillein, "3. May—Day of the Sun" by Georg Schwarm, and "The Attitude of a The-

osophist Towards Politics" by Mary Linné. The next five days were given to conducting the Theosophical Summerschool, the discussions for which were based on the two chapters of "Behind the Veils with Science" in G. de Purucker's *Esoteric Tradition*.

Successful Study

Mrs. Otto-Enthoven of The Hague, Holland, reports that the 4 study-groups of the School for the study of the Esoteric Philosophy had a successful year studying the Stanzas of Dzyan, meeting Saturday afternoons. They now plan an additional evening meeting, and on a Wednesday Mrs. Otto-Enthoven will give a class on the Bhagavad-Gîtâ for students out of town who cannot attend in the evening. The Fall program begins September 23. They report "fraternal relations" with U.L.T., Adyar, the TS-HPB, and I.S.I.S.

"Search and Find"

Representative of appreciation from many sources of Point Loma Publications' just published theosophical index book by Elsie Benjamin, *Search and Find*, are these two comments. From D. J. P. Kok, International Study-Center for Independent Search for Truth (I.S. I.S.), The Hague, Holland: "Mrs. Benjamin's 'Index' will be of great help! This is felt by several of our members. Preparing addresses, articles and study-classes, it will be handy to have an index to the wealth of books we have. Enclosed is our order." From the Steloma Metaphysical Book Center of West Sacramento, California: "That book, *Search and Find*, is an excellent tool—saves a lot of time. Thank you very much." (154 pp. paper \$3.95).

Skinner of "Source of Measures" Fame

The following item comes from Wizards Bookshelf and will be of special interest to readers of *The Secret Doctrine*:

J. Ralston Skinner was born in Lockport, New York, in 1830, moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, and was listed as attorney at law there in the 1851-52 Directory. First professor of pathology at Cincinnati College of Medicine & Surgery. Served as Major and Judge Advocate on General Rosecrans' staff in the American Civil War, November 1862 to March 1865. One of the founding members of the Cincinnati Society of Natural History, 1870. Joined McMillan Lodge No. 141 G.L.F. & A. Masons, 1885. A friend of Dr. J. D. Buck (who was a devoted supporter and friend of W. Q. Judge), President of Cincinnati Medical College (*Buck's Modern World Movements* mentions that Skinner received a 40-page letter from H. P. Blavatsky on the Kaballah). Besides articles in the *Masonic Review* and *New Age* and 7 pamphlets, he wrote commentaries on a rare treatise of Vitruvius on Architecture for Mary Fletcher Huntington, London 1867 (in mss, 194 pp). In his obituary notice of Sept. 1893 reference is made to a symbolic translation of the Bible, of which only three copies were printed. Adyar is presently typing an unpublished manuscript, and two more are in Cincinnati.

(James Ralston Skinner is the author of *Key to the Hebrew Egyptian Mystery in the Source of Measures*, 412 pp. \$17.50, one of the Secret Doctrine Reference Series issued by Wizards Bookshelf. For complete catalog of their books address Box 6600, San Diego, CA 92106 U.S.A.).

The Death Penalty

A United Press despatch of April 12 reads: "Albany N.Y.—Gov. Hugh Carey yesterday vetoed a bill to reinstate New York State's death penalty. The veto came as no surprise. Carey rejected a broader death bill last year and has vowed to commute any death sentence imposed while he is governor. "I do not believe the state should take life because the criminal has done so," Cary said in a veto message. "I do not believe in deceiving ourselves that the death penalty will solve the problem of violent crime. I do not believe that the ultimate vengeance of execution will make us a better or even a safer people." Theosophists could add an even stronger and more persuasive word to that! (See *Eclectic*, No. 46, W. Q. Judge's answer to question.)

William Q. Judge Series

Under the title "Theosophy in India" the U.L.T. series of Judge booklets continues. No. 26 has the following articles: Theosophy as a Cult in India, Madame Blavatsky in India, The So-called Exposé of Madame Blavatsky, The Theosophical Society as Related to Brahmanism and Buddhism, The Letter to the Brahmins, India and Her Theosophists, Nigamagama Dharma Sabha, The Truth About East and West.—A valuable collection.

"Issues in the T.S." is the title of No. 27, a compilation of articles that focus on what became known as "The Judge Case," charges against him, W.Q.J.'s statement at the European Convention of 1894, a message from Master M. regarding him, Report of Proceedings of Ninth Annual Convention of April 1895, and W.Q.J.'s Letter to European Convention of 1895, which has this noble peroration: "Let us then press forward together in the great work of the real Theosophical Movement which is aided by working organizations, but is above them all. Together we can devise more and better ways for spreading the light of truth through all the earth. Mutually assisting and encouraging one another we may learn how to put Theosophy into practice so as to be able to teach and enforce it by example before others. We will then each and all be members of that Universal Lodge of Free and Independent Theosophists which embrace every friend of the human race. And to all this we beg your corporate official answer for our more definite and certain information, and to the end that this and your favorable reply may remain as evidence and monuments between us."

For all interested in theosophical history and wanting to obtain a true and honest perspective of facts this is an important gathering together of articles and should be required reading. (The Theosophy Company, 245 West 33rd St., Los Angeles, Ca 90007. Each booklet of the series 75 cents.)

Some Recent Theosophical Articles of Note

For those interested in reincarnation: "An Interview With Geddes MacGregor" (author of *Reincarnation in Christianity*, published by the Theosophical Publishing House in February 1978 as a Quest Book), *The American Theosophist*, August 1978 (Box 270, Wheaton, Ill. 60178).

For those interested in meditation: "Dialectical Meditation: the Art of Balanced and Mature Growth" by Haridas Chaudhuri—in the same issue of *The American Theosophist*; and in the June issue, "Theosophy and the Golden Dawn" by David Reigle — an historical sketch pointing clearly the differences between the two.

Sunrise (Theosophical University Press, P.O. Bin C, Pasadena, California 91109) in its June-July issue: "Man: Destiny Unlimited" by Blair A. Moffett, a review of Arthur M. Young's *The Reflexive Universe: Evolution of Consciousness*, a theosophically important book issued by Delacorte Press, 1976.

"Three in One", a student's collation from *The Secret Doctrine* bears on the triple evolutionary scheme in Nature, the Monadic, the Intellectual, and the Physical—in *Theosophy*, August. (see address above.)

"Who is the Teacher?" by Joy Mills (June, *The Theosophist*, Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras 600020, India), discusses guidelines for coming into touch with the Higher Self, man's true teacher. The July issue has a talk given to the Convention of the Italian Section by John S. Coats, titled "Practical Theosophy". It explains, among other things, the difference between a 'second-hand thought' and 'new thought'. The latter says: If this idea appeals to you, take it; if it does not appeal to you, leave it. Do not believe it merely because I say so. A 'second hand thought' person is a prisoner. 'Second-hand thought' is founded on authority and its motto is 'pay and obey'. 'New thought' is founded on the laws of our own nature and its shibboleth is 'Know yourself.'

The lead article in the August *Bulletin* No. 384 of Corresponding Fellows Lodge of Theosophists, (24 Upper Brighton Road, Worthing, Sussex, England, BN 14 9Hu), is "The Noumena Behind the Phenomena or The Causes that Bring About the Effects". It discusses: 1. the general rules or guidelines covering our Theosophical study; 2. What light Theosophy throws on the nature of blood (i.e. as concerns blood transfusions); 3. Findings of modern radiesthesia; 4. The role of the physical body per se. The editorial note states that all this is by way of an addendum to the discussion at the June Garden Party on "what Theosophy has to say about the destruction of the world in the event of a nuclear disaster, when man tampers with Nature so much that he sets everything out of whack."

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